



## Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group

### **THE NHS NEEDS YOUR HELP TO ENSURE THE LOCAL HEALTH BUDGET IS WELL SPENT**

NHS Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is currently reviewing medications that local GPs prescribe to make sure they are spending the local NHS health budget as effectively as possible.

The CCG continuously reviews the services it commissions or 'buys' and like other public bodies, has a finite budget and there are limits to what it can spend the money on. The NHS is funded by the government from our taxes, and the CCG wants to use this money wisely by spending it on the most effective medicine and treatments.

There are several propositions currently being discussed, the first is to stop NHS prescriptions for medicines and treatments used for short term or minor conditions that are readily available in pharmacies, supermarkets and other retail stores.

The CCG wishes to encourage and support people to look after themselves through 'self-care' and self-management when they can and wherever possible. This means that people take more responsibility for their own health and well-being where they can. For instance, pharmacies are a good source of advice and support and can release GP time to allow GPs to treat people with more serious conditions. The NHS 111 telephone advice service and NHS Choices website are equally good sources of advice and support.

The CCG is also reviewing its policy on gluten free food and is proposing to stop prescribing it. In 2016/17, NHS Morecambe Bay CCG spent £200,000 on gluten free products, which could have been invested in other patient services. NHS prescriptions for gluten free foods to patients who have been diagnosed with coeliac disease started over 40 years ago when gluten-free foods were not as readily available in supermarkets as they are today.

NHS Morecambe Bay CCG wants to know your views on these proposals so it can explore the issues in more detail. The consultation will run until 14 November 2017.

Dr Alex Gaw Clinical Chair for NHS Morecambe Bay CCG said:

"We currently spend approximately £325,000 each quarter (every three months) on GP prescriptions for self-care items, which amounts to about £1,300,000 annually. Many of these prescriptions are necessary for acute and urgent conditions and your GP will continue to prescribe them. However, we estimate that over half of these prescriptions are potentially an unnecessary cost to the NHS locally."

All residents of the Morecambe Bay area or those registered with a GP surgery within Morecambe Bay have the potential to be affected.



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The CCG is encouraging patients to complete an online survey to give their views about these proposals.

The surveys are available online at: <http://tinyurl.com/MBCCG-Prescription> or via the website [www.morecambebayccg.nhs.uk](http://www.morecambebayccg.nhs.uk)

If you would prefer to obtain a paper questionnaire, you can email [info@morecambebayccg.nhs.uk](mailto:info@morecambebayccg.nhs.uk) or phone (01524) 519369/49252.